The above sketch Is after a photograph by Louisa Dresel, Courtesy of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association

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INTRODUCTION

For twenty-three years following the turn of the century, a rural trolley ran through Old Deerfield as part of an extensive streetcar network in the Connecticut Valley. This aspect of Deerfield's history has been seldom noted, and many residents of the street in 1971 were unaware that a trolley line ever lay on the thoroughfare's right shoulder. In this paper, a history of the Deerfield electric and its impact on the village is related, with the intention of explaining the line's importance for the town.

A study of this type required varied sources. Some secondary works existed concerned with general information on streetcars and interurbans, but few studies existed examining the effects of rural trolleys on social history. In preparation for this essay, interviews were held with many village residents living in Deerfield during the streetcar period, and these became important sources of material. In addition, extensive use was made of files of the Greenfield Gazette and Courier for local streetcar information. The newspaper proved an invaluable source, particularly when it was discovered that most local street railway company documents had been lost during the 1937-1938 Franklin County floods. Town reports, school reports, and census data were examined, as well as trolley guides to Deerfield and other period pamphlets on the village.

The paper's description of the trolley is not limited to Old Deerfield, but much of the line's impact could be accurately measured only for the village. The area presented a concise region to study, and most of the people interviewed were familiar mainly with the street and its immediate vicinity. But where possible, the streetcar's effects on neighboring areas have been discussed.

I. ABSTRACT OF THE TOWN OF DEERFIELD, 1895-1924

The town of Deerfield is located at the northern end of the Connecticut Valley, in Western Massachusetts, and was the predominant agricultural town of Franklin County throughout the period. In 1895, more than half the town's labor force were farmers or agricultural laborers, the latter category including relatives of farm owners, and most women were classified in related domestic work. This labor ratio remained fairly constant during the streetcar era. The town comprised two separate areas, Old Deerfield and South Deerfield, the latter being the more commercial region of the town. It contained the few industries, which included a leather pocketbook factory.

In a study of Connecticut Valley agricultural trends in the nineteenth century, Margaret Pabst classified Deerfield as a lowland town of the genre that remained agricultural throughout the century. In her research on the late 1800s, Pabst found continued farm production for urban markets, with much of the town's produce shipped via railroad. There was an expanded dairy production, especially in milk, tobacco growing was revived, and onion and cucumber cultivation were begun. These trends continued into the early twentieth century.

From 1895 to 1905, Deerfield dropped in population due to the loss of Cheapside to Greenfield in 1896. This loss accentuated the agricultural aspect of Deerfield, as Cheapside became the location of several tap-and-leather factories. In this period, a

gradual increase in the number of immigrants occurred, but it was not large and was offset partially by the loss of foreign born in the Cheapside area.

The ten years from 1905 saw a slight overall increase in numbers, but a rapid growth of the foreign population. South Deerfield was more affected by demographic changes than was Old Deerfield. Few immigrants moved onto the street, although some lived in the immediate area.

The village was a farming community similar to the town, but was also often described as a historical site. It had long been known for its colonial history, and this aspect had been strengthened with the founding of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association in 1870, and the establishment of Memorial Hall. In addition, the small amount of tampering done to its street enabled the village to retain a historical appearance. Aligned with this historical atmosphere were the Deerfield Industries established in 1899. Village women produced handmade crewel embroideries, palm-leaf baskets, and other items using colonial techniques. These cottage industries attempted to preserve a colonial heritage.

Many artists and literary people spent summers in the village, adding to it a further special sense. A Deerfield correspondent for the Gazette and Courier found such residents "living in (Deerfield's) past as much as in its present." These summer people, among them J. Wells Champney, the New York artist, "come for study and recreation, form acquaintances and friends, and finally marry into one of the old families, thus identifying themselves with the old town—this is a benefit because only the better class of people are attracted to Deerfield."

As a result, guidebooks to New England and Western Massachusetts emphasized Old Deerfield's historical and artistic aspects, mentioning Memorial Hall, Deerfield Industries, and old houses. During the period of the rural trolley, the village was considered a tourist and pleasure spot. The character of the town of Deerfield, and of the village in particular, affected the streetcar's impact by placing certain limitations on its development.

III. GENERAL HISTORY OF ELECTRIC TRANSPORTATION IN THE UNITED STATES AND CONNECTICUT VALLEY

The story of the electric interurban is relatively brief within the span of American transportation history. Its time period extended from the mid-1880s to the onset of the Great Depression, but varied in individual states and regions. The interurban was an electrically-powered passenger conveyance moving at high speed between urban regions. It resembled a city streetcar and was originally an outgrowth of the latter's success within urban centers. Intercity electrics often had to compete with railroads for the same patronage and depended on frequent service in order to attract people to them. Most interurbans had private right-of-way through rural areas, and, on longer runs in Ohio and Illinois, their makeup included lounge cars, diners, and sleepers.

Within Massachusetts, the term "interurban" connoted a somewhat different type of service. The state contained more electric than steam railroad trackage and, for its

area and population, included the densest network of streetcar lines in the nation. But most of its electrics were not strictly interurban, although they ran intercity. They were built as extensions of city trolley lines and did not radically differ from the urban roads. Massachusetts interurbans did not travel at high speeds, with the exception of the Boston-Worcester run, and usually shared their right-of-way with public highways. A majority of them were referred to as rural trolleys because they did not incorporate common interurban features. Their purpose was similar to that of standard intercity lines, but their technical aspect differed. The distinctive nature of these rural trolleys affected their longevity.

In the Connecticut Valley, electric trolley service began as competition to several horse-propelled lines in the Springfield and Northampton areas. The horse lines had been established in 1866 but had always been limited by considerations of speed and duration. The fastest animals were capable only of eight miles per hour and could not be worked indefinitely. These routes were confined to small city areas and did not interconnect.

The valley's first electric streetcar line opened in Springfield during June 1890, and within three years horse railways were extinct. Other electric street railways were soon constructed. In 1895, a line was opened to Conway, Massachusetts, from the Boston and Maine Railroad north of the town. Also, a line between Greenfield and Turners Falls, and another from Turners Falls to Millers Falls, were completed.

From the beginning, these rural trolleys were different from typical, high-speed interurbans. Their service was patterned after that given by the horse-cars, and while much faster and more efficient, it was unsatisfactory for longer trips that were possible on Midwestern interurbans. All of these lines were built on public thoroughfares and required individual town approval for construction.

Also, few surveys were taken to determine the various possibilities for patronage. The lines were quickly planned and finished, with little thought given to the economics of operation.

Edward S. Mason, in his study of street railways in Massachusetts, called the period from 1890 to 1903 one of trolley expansion, and construction in the Connecticut Valley was concluded within this time span. In 1897, a line was run between Shelburne Falls and Colrain, and two years later streetcars were running from Amherst to Hatfield. Trolley construction south from Greenfield was discussed in 1900 but did not begin at a not-yet-determined time until the next year with the building of a line to Deerfield. (Detail of the Deerfield line's construction is in Chapter IV.) By March of 1903, a through track from Greenfield to Northampton had been completed, along with connections to Springfield. With this road's completion, most planned construction was finished. (See Appendix.)

The separate companies operating trackage north of Amherst were consolidated into the Connecticut Valley Street Railway Company in 1905. Until its demise nineteen years later, this company ran the major rural electrics in Franklin County and the adjoining area. For several years it showed a profit, although specific divisions such as the Deerfield line often lost money. It operated several pleasure parks accessible by trolley, including

Laurel Park and Lake Pleasant. First signs of business trouble occurred during World War I, with rapidly rising costs and the growing popularity of motor-driven vehicles. In 1921, the company could not avoid receivership, although it managed to operate until 1924 when its equipment was sold. Trackage between Greenfield and Turners Falls was bought by the towns of Greenfield and Montague, and the nine-mile stretch was operated for ten years as a municipal trolley.

The interurban in general operated relatively short-distance trips, which were the least profitable type of passenger operations. Rural trolleys of the Connecticut Valley were even more limited in their service. They provided little full intercity movement because of their relatively slow speed compared with trains and were used mainly for trips between country and town. For a period, they provided such service better than other modes of conveyance. They offered a superior form of pleasure travel, and much of their patronage resulted from this type of trip. But the onset of the motor car severely damaged the streetcar's patronage. The rural trolley in Western Massachusetts receded quickly when faced with auto competition.

IV. CONSTRUCTION OF THE DEERFIELD RURAL TROLLEY

The first main trolley lines in Franklin County ran from Greenfield to Millers Falls, built in 1895. In 1899, trackage was laid from Montague (on the main line) to the Lake Pleasant resort. Throughout Massachusetts at this time, a general cry for trolley expansion was being sounded. The electrics were returning a profit, with special cars run frequently to Lake Pleasant in the summer, and regularly to all stations after opera nights in Greenfield. Early 1900 saw the directors of the Bay State Construction Company apply to the Massachusetts Legislature for incorporation of a company to build a trolley line to Deerfield. Its directors included John A. Taggart of Turners Falls, Charles Clapp of Greenfield, and Daniel P. Abercrombie, Jr. of Greenfield, whose uncle spent his summers in Old Deerfield.

Controversy quickly erupted over the proposal to run the electric track on the village street, and opposition existed to the entire streetcar scheme. Opponents were numerically small but of significant status in the village. George Sheldon feared that electric cars would permanently damage the street's unique character, which included its physical attributes of grass and elms. He voiced concern that the many summer residents of the town might stop coming, which would cause substantial monetary loss. The legislator could see scant value from a rural streetcar in a farming community.

Several people and newspapers rallied to Sheldon's support. W.H. Abercrombie, a summer resident from Brookline and an uncle of the trolley company's director, opposed the line completely, saying that he would not have renovated houses at the street's south end had he known of the proposal. Mrs. J. Wells Champney, wife of the artist, feared village "desecration." A permanent Deerfield resident, artist George Fuller, also opposed tracks on the main street. In a letter to the local editor, a summer occupant bemoaned that "with a railroad of any shape the 'Street' can no longer be that restful Mecca to which we who are condemned to a city life look forward with joy." He added, "No convenience can make amends for the crime of destruction of one of the most beautiful avenues in the world."

The Deerfield community was split over the trolley issue, with summer residents and artistic persons aligned against permanent dwellers and much of the farming community. At an open hearing on the subject, selectman E.B. Arms noted how beneficial the line would be to South Deerfield, and spoke of little opposition to it from that area. Another town selectman, Charles Ashley, saw the electric as a great convenience which would link Deerfield with South Deerfield, and both to Greenfield. The Greenfield newspaper gave its support to the trolley, and at one point refused to give further space to Sheldon's letters.

In an editorial, the paper's editor said that a trolley would enable more people to visit Deerfield, and would end the "shut-in" quality of the town for permanent residents by letting them make social contacts in Greenfield. It was stated that most of the trolley's revenue would come from summer recreational trips, which necessitated the line on the main street for tourists. The editor observed, "The only thing to be destroyed would be the pretty illusion which the imaginative feel, that in visiting Old Deerfield, they have somehow been carried back into a past period of colonial life."

The issue was major, especially with the general conception of electrics as demand items which raised real estate values and improved a town's appearance. In the spring of 1900, full-page advertisements appeared in the paper displaying houses in the new Kenwood land tract, bounded by Pierce, Davis, Federal, and Kenwood streets. They emphasized the nearness of the Greenfield streetcar to the area. But the Deerfield trolley question was debated widely, even before a Greenfield High School audience.

Formulas were proposed to run the line on a different route through Old Deerfield, but were felt by promoters to be counterproductive in terms of assuring patronage. They believed that tracks had to run on the most traveled thoroughfare. Despite the heated argument, the annual town meeting in March, 1900, voted one hundred forty-two to one in favor of instructing the selectman to grant a street railway franchise for a line down the main street. A factor in the overwhelming vote was South Deerfield's lack of opposition to the project.

The Greenfield and Deerfield Street Railway Company was officially incorporated by an act of the state legislature in May, 1900, but did not specifically request a franchise until February of the following year. In the interim, plans were drawn up to extend the lines south from Deerfield to connect with the Northampton road planned to Hatfield. Deerfield selectmen granted the franchise in early March, 1901, provided that trackage be completed from Cheapside to Mount Sugar Loaf within a year, and the remainder of the route within three years. The latter stipulation included construction of a bridge over the Deerfield River at Cheapside to bring the electric into Greenfield center.

Surveys for the line were made during early summer, but building was delayed while the company waited to see if the planned Northampton connection would be simultaneously built. During surveying, some objection was made to running the electric on the street's west side because it would interfere with post office and hotel operations, though most people saw no real harm. By September, most of the line had been planned, and only minor routing problems with the state highway commission remained.

Construction of the line began in the first week of October. An Italian work gang provided the labor under the supervision of a Greenfield contractor. The Italians were itinerant workers, hired out from Boston for various street railway and municipal contracts by a "padrone," or labor contractor. They were housed on land belonging to Theodore Childs, near the intersection of Wapping Road and Main Street. Their dormitories were quickly dubbed "Hotel Italia," and some residents voiced alarm at the presence of fifty foreigners. A reassurance was printed saying that the Italians were quiet, hard workers, and well-supervised. No trouble occurred during construction, but few residents were outwardly friendly to the gang.

Trackage was rapidly laid, and optimism was expressed over its completion. Several persons noted that the highway from Cheapside to Deerfield had been improved with the trolley's advent, trees being trimmed and better grading effected. In a letter to the editor, an unnamed Deerfield resident expressed satisfaction with the trolley line, saying that the street had been little damaged. Some people did not appreciate the wire-supported poles, even after they were painted dark green to blend with foliage. But most residents anticipated the convenience that the new trolley would provide to Greenfield, with several looking forward to more visitors in the village.

On December 7, 1901, after a week's delay due to heavy snowfall, the Cheapside-Deerfield streetcars made their first trips, in about sixteen minutes. They ran only to the middle of the village street, because work was still in progress below that point. In this incomplete stage, the trolley did not make money, but the line was opened to accustom residents to its presence.

Construction between Deerfield and Northampton took over another year to complete, largely as a result of arguments between the street railway company and the town of Whately. Its selectmen desired that the tracks come through Whately's main street instead of skirting the town's eastern portion. The company favored the latter route for both reasons of mileage and construction costs. But selectmen were worried that residents would not patronize a line built away from the center, and that the railroad, which ran closer to Whately's main street than the projected electric, would cancel several runs once the trolley was completed.

As the controversy dragged on, the streetcar line was finished to Whately's town lines, with cars running from Greenfield to South Deerfield by late summer 1902. The selectmen subsequently bowed to the inevitable, and the remaining track segments were completed. Regular runs between Greenfield and Northampton began in March 1903, and the Cheapside bridge was finished the next month. An overcrossing of the railroad tracks at Sprout's Corner in South Deerfield was finished in early 1904. Until its completion, passengers had been required to change trolleys there, walking to another car across the B&M tracks.

V. THE RURAL TROLLEY OPERATION AND ITS IMPACT ON DEERFIELD

Old Deerfield had existed as a quiet community for several decades. Because it was primarily agricultural, the community had little need for efficient, short-haul

transportation. East of town on the foothills was the railroad, which ran five times a day to Boston, Springfield, and Greenfield. It was almost never used for short trips except on special occasions, such as attending meetings. Most families made their infrequent trips for goods and/or services by wagon or carriage, using riding horses. After 1880, Rufus Williams, who lived on South Lane, ran a small "pony-express" type service to Greenfield, making several daily trips. He picked up mail until rural free delivery was begun in 1896, and ran errands for a fee. Williams would stop at any point along the road provided the person hung a red flag from the window. He naturally opposed the rural trolley which put him out of business.

First changes brought by the streetcar were in methods of receiving and charging passengers. Because the line ran on a tight schedule, stops were made only at poles painted with a white stripe. This limited stopping had not been necessary for the Williams transport or for earlier horse-cars. It was closely connected with the zone-fare payment. Most New England trolley lines used the zone system, which facilitated transfers to streetcars of other companies. Traveling south on the Deerfield division of the street railway, the first zone included trackage from Greenfield to the south end of the street. To Northampton required payment for six additional zones. Northbound the line included seven zones, but the final one extended from the north end of the street to the Greenfield Common. A single zone fare was five cents until increased by a penny in 1909 due to rising costs. Some village residents walked to either ends of the street, depending on their destination, in order to avoid paying extra zone charges.

Because town employment lay predominantly in farming, residents of Deerfield seldom used the trolley for travel to work. A few lawyers and bank clerks who lived on the street commuted to Greenfield, and one or two persons took electrics to South Deerfield. A local school teacher taught in Greenfield and rode the electric, and moved from Deerfield when it stopped. But most village residents worked on farms, and those who sold their produce in neighboring areas used wagons. A generation lag helped limit the impact of the trolley on work patterns. Most village adults in 1900 were accustomed to horse travel, and the few required to travel to work used horses. By the time that children inured to riding streetcars reached employment age, the automobile had become the dominant transportation vehicle.

In Greenfield, people rarely took the streetcar to work if they were employed within walking distance of their homes. The habit of walking to work was ingrained, and the trolley would not be used except in cold or damp weather. Except for factory workers in Cheapside and Turners Falls, people regarded the electric as an available convenience, occasionally helpful in getting to work.

The Turners Falls division of the street railway did carry significant numbers of commuting workers. Many Greenfield laborers worked in the Cheapside and Turners Falls mills and depended upon the trolley regularly. This line was consistently the profitable part of the system and sold special workingmen's fares. On the Deerfield division, streetcar effects on employment patterns were minimal.

The impact of electrics on shopping patterns was similar but varied more and

involved additional considerations. Most Old Deerfield families had not often shopped in either Greenfield or South Deerfield before the trolley ran, either producing necessary items at home or getting them at the village store across from the Inn. Occasional trips into Greenfield were made for purchases, but usually no more than twice a month. Many merchants traversed Franklin County by wagon, selling items door-to-door.

With the electric's arrival, the amount of shopping done in Greenfield slowly increased. Several families that had made trips by horse switched to trolleys, but most farmers had no compelling need to alter buying habits. Merchants continued to sell door-to-door, and most necessary items continued to be available in Deerfield. Only gradually did shopping patterns alter, mainly as a result of using trolleys for other functions. People began to shop by electric after having used it for pleasure and/or school.

More frequent use of streetcars for obtaining goods was made by residents not engaged in agricultural employment. Professional people and persons in special situations, such as widows and children, shopped more often by trolley. Poorer farm families or those in a more specialized type of farming also depended on the electric. Almost all those groups bought in Greenfield, with few shopping in South Deerfield. Reasons for this pattern included: a trip to Greenfield involved only one zone fare, Greenfield offered a better selection of items, and village residents regarded South Deerfield with certain disdain, it being where numerous immigrants had settled.

Greenfield's pattern depended upon distance from the center of town and upon a family's relative wealth. Many townspeople did not own riding horses and either walked or rode the streetcar. Middle-class families appear to have shopped by electric more frequently than blue-collar people. No instances of buying produce in Deerfield were noted, as it would be shipped to Greenfield via railroad.

The rural trolley worked gradual effects on purchasing habits. The key element in the increasing use of electrics for shopping was convenience. During the period, the number of traveling merchants decreased, and more farms became specialized. The streetcar offered residents an alternate method to shopping and had an effect in creating reliance upon convenient transportation for daily errands.

Deerfield residents did not use the rural trolley mainly for commuting, and the line could not have lasted by relying on such patronage. This division of the Connecticut Valley Company seldom made a profit, with Daniel Abercrombie stating in 1923 that it had lost money for twenty years. In 1915, Deerfield had a density of 84 persons and 16.7 habitations per square mile, with corresponding figures for Greenfield 586.9 and 111.3. The village had an insufficient number of persons and dwellings along the trolley line for a profit to be made from commuter use.

The electric between Greenfield and Northampton did approach a profit situation for several years by emphasizing pleasure and recreational patronage. Proponents of the streetcar through Deerfield had stressed social benefits to be derived from it, and these benefits comprised the major uses residents made of trolleys. In areas of social contact and pleasure travel, the streetcar had significant effects on people's habits.

In years preceding the electric road, village families had occasionally taken weekend trips by carriage through the Franklin County region, but they would be carefully planned and have definite purposes. Such Sunday excursions might be taken once or twice a month. Children were unable to take frequent trips except by bicycle and were consequently limited in the area able to explore. Residents generally were accustomed to few short social trips.

Rural trolleys had a great impact on the recreational patterns of children. Many young people, especially high school students, rode streetcars regularly to schools, which were becoming more centralized. (For details, see below.) Friendships with classmates from surrounding communities were established, and a natural use of electrics for visiting developed. Residents recounted many instances of taking trolleys to visit or spend the night with friends. Trips into both Greenfield and South Deerfield were common, as well as occasional rides to Northampton. As a corollary, Greenfield children visited friends in the village and elsewhere. Another popular use of electrics by young people was for music lessons. They generally traveled to Greenfield for such instruction, but one child living in the Bars area of Old Deerfield took lessons in Northampton. The Bars was a half-mile walk from the line through Wapping, but the distance did not prevent frequent trolley use for social occasions. Children rode streetcars to see movies, with Saturday being Greenfield's big movie day. Several village boys played baseball, and players and spectators rode trolleys to the games.

Streetcar companies throughout Massachusetts built summer pleasure parks along trolley right-of-ways, and they were most easily accessible by electric. In 1902, companies owned 31 such parks, and the number increased during the first decade. A number of these areas existed in the Connecticut Valley, several owned by trolley companies, and others operated in conjunction with hotel/restaurant groups. Mountain Park at the foot of Mount Tom in Holyoke was a popular recreational spot and included a cog railway running to its peak. Laurel Park and Sugar Loaf Mountain were two areas owned by the Connecticut Valley Street Railway. In 1912, Laurel Park became so crowded that a special trolley office was opened there. Franklin County's best-known pleasure area was Lake Pleasant, located on the Turners Falls division.

Peak seasons at these parks ran from mid-June to mid-September, and all areas offered activities. Band and orchestra concerts were performed at Lake Pleasant and Sugar Loaf, and Laurel Park and Lake Pleasant were sites for substantial summer colonies and were also popular religious retreats. At Lake Pleasant, the trolley company sponsored vaudeville shows and Saturday night dances and would run special cars on all divisions after the events.

Old Deerfield residents recalled many trips made to pleasure parks when they were children. Lake Pleasant was very popular, being only a short ride from the village and offering several activities. Laurel and Sugar Loaf parks were often visited, but an excursion to Mountain Park was a more substantial trip. Most individual park trips were made on weekends and frequently without the entire family. For adults, the necessity of maintaining a farm combined with well-developed habits of making few short trips to mitigate frequent family excursions. But family trolley trips were taken more regularly

than had been carriage rides.

A popular organized activity done by streetcar was the holding of a church or Sunday school picnic at a pleasure park. The newspaper contained weekly items during the summer about groups holding picnics at Lake Pleasant or Laurel Park and traveling by trolley. Deerfield residents remembered frequent outings and said that often a church or organization would charter special electrics to take members.

Residents made other social uses of rural trolleys. A common way to cool off on hot summer nights was to take trolley rides in open cars. Persons traveling by railroad to Boston for shopping and/or visiting would take the streetcar to Greenfield to meet trains. Some residents took the trolley to church, especially Catholic immigrants whose nearest church was in South Deerfield. Farm groups held Grange meetings at several locations, all reached by streetcar. Summer residents of Old Deerfield did not generally use the electric, as they were able to afford carriages and drivers. This fact had been stressed by proponents of the line to undermine the opposition of these people.

The electrics also had important effects on the numbers and types of people visiting Deerfield. As early as 1904, Robert Derrah had issued a trolley guide to the Connecticut Valley describing Deerfield as the “quietest, prettiest, and quaintest of old-fashioned towns, with the houses all of the old-time order.”

He wrote of the many artists and “lovers of natural beauty” who resided in the town during summer. Emma Coleman in her 1907 guide wrote of the “beautiful street” and the Deerfield Industries. Other pamphlets dwelled on the town’s history and Memorial Hall. In 1909, the street railway erected a series of signposts near their trackage to acquaint riders with the area’s history.

Most village residents recalled tourists coming to visit Memorial Hall, and some Greenfield citizens remembered linking the town name to Indian atrocities, having heard of the Deerfield “massacre” so often. Annual meetings of the P.V.M.A. attracted guests from the region, many of whom came by streetcar. In 1902, sixty-five members traveled by electric. Similarly, persons attending summer historical pageants staged by the village until 1915 came by trolley. Visitors came to Old Deerfield to view the work of the Deerfield Industries.

The affiliated societies held joint annual exhibitions in July, and at Christmas made considerable sales from gift purchases. The Deerfield Inn and the Pocumtuck House (later called the Old Deerfield Arms) were fairly popular places at which to have Sunday dinner. Families would come from Greenfield to dine at the Inn, but its quality was remembered by not-a-few diners. Friends and relatives of those in the village occasionally visited by streetcar. Colleges in the Holyoke-Northampton area held annual field days, and groups from girls’ schools would often come by trolley to Deerfield, picnicking and observing the various cottage industries. The town was quite popular with Smith College coeds, who came on their annual Mountain Day. Many would have pictures taken by the Allen sisters.

Effects of the rural trolley on Deerfield's social life were considerable, affecting recreational patterns of residents and increasing tourism in the village. The Deerfield division showed its best receipts during summer months with the heavy pleasure travel, and suffered considerably when the automobile became a major recreational competitor. Through 1915, electrics did substantial business between May and October. The street railway often ran streetcars every half-hour during the summer, rather than its normal hourly schedule.

The pleasure trips taken on electrics were for relatively short distances. Rural trolleys in Western Massachusetts were unable to cover long distances with satisfactory speed, and longer trips would customarily be made by train. Only trolley buffs would use streetcars regularly for rides to Springfield or Hartford. Their main effects were in increasing the number of short journeys taken.

In the area of school transportation, rural trolleys played an important role, although they did not substantially profit from the patronage. Massachusetts Street Railway Commissioners voted to require trolley companies to transport school children for half-fare. The stipulation was extremely beneficial to school committees, but was consistently regretted by street railway management.

Deerfield's school committee had used wagons to transport school children before the trolley line was built. Because of the township's size and small population density, a large amount of conveying was required. Many of the children carried by wagons were elementary students who would be most affected by long walks during cold weather. Most high school students rode, but some walked to the town school, which was Deerfield Academy. The school board was constantly engaged in attempts to lower its transportation budget, and in 1906 the superintendent expressed a wish that "in time... shifting of population will bring a solution to the problem." Such a shift never occurred, but better means of transportation became available.

With the streetcar's completion, centralization of schools, which had long been desired, could be more easily implemented. The need to find additional team drivers, said to be difficult "unless fair compensation was offered," became less compelling because children could use electrics at half-price. This fact helped in the decision to close the Wapping school and send its students to Old Deerfield. The school committee explained that those pupils not already being transported (by horse teams) lived on or near the trolley line. The superintendent often emphasized the need for regular school attendance, and the trolley could aid in improving performance. A Report of the Massachusetts Legislature in 1913 implied that school districts lacking street railway service lagged behind other towns in terms of pupil attendance.

The amount of money expended each year for primary school transportation grew steadily through 1924, with the proportion spent for trolley use significant until after World War I. The Deerfield school committee continued to use additional means of conveyance for primary students, because only three of eight grammar schools were accessible by electrics. The streetcar was well regarded for its safer and more pleasant conditions, and the board sought to phase out completely its horse teams. But a phase-

out was impossible until perfected motor buses were purchased after the war. They soon replaced both wagons and electrics.

Until 1921, the town had only one high school, the Academy. Located on the streetcar line, it was the necessary focal point for all high school pupils, and was heavily dependent on the trolley. Students in South Deerfield and Wapping regularly rode the electrics to the Academy. Pupils from the Bars walked to the Wapping stop and caught the trolley for school. Funding for Deerfield Academy transportation was separate from other accounts of the school system, and through the period, half of the Academy's transportation budget went for trolley use.

Children living on the village street walked to their schools and did not need the streetcar. But a few attended Greenfield High School and rode it daily. Their parents believed that a better college preparatory education was possible in Greenfield than at the Academy. Alternately, some Greenfield students took the line to the Academy. The rural trolley served a major function in ensuring adequate school transportation.

The Connecticut Valley Street Railway carried small freight as well as passengers, although this part of their operation was not large or notable until the latter years of trolley service. The service was called the "trolley express," and ran on a fast schedule to all points on the company's trackage, making only a few definite stops.

It connected at Northampton with Sullivan's Springfield express car and was able to carry merchandise from Holyoke and Springfield. Department stores in Greenfield occasionally received shipments by trolley. An employee of Swift and Company at Clay Hill, Greenfield, recalled the company sending small packages to Millers Falls on electrics. But the type of fast, short-haul shipments made on the "trolley express" were taken over by motor trucks.

Another more important service done by trolley was that of carrying mail along the Springfield-Greenfield route. For several years, residents of Franklin County had attempted to have the Boston and Maine Railroad run a mail car on an early train from Springfield, in order that newspapers and packages could be received before mid-morning. The B&M consistently refused to provide such service, and angered residents accustomed to more efficient mail delivery after receiving RFD in 1896. The government agreed to let the trolley handle mail, and for fourteen years from April 1905, a streetcar mail service ran from Northampton to Greenfield.

The trolley mail left Northampton in the early morning after connecting from a Springfield electric. It had one hour and fifteen minutes to make a normal ninety-minute run because it met a train leaving Greenfield. To fulfill the schedule, this electric ran up to fifty miles per hour, a considerable speed in that most of the trackage shared right-of-ways. In the opposite direction ran a late-night mail bringing the day's final delivery to Deerfield and other towns along the route.

In 1911, the street railway company experienced its only labor trouble. The problem

came over the proposed formation of a union, with six men discharged at Northampton for supposed agitation. A sympathy strike was organized, but few Franklin County employees apparently aligned with the union organizers. The main effect was several weeks of vandalism against the line, with windows broken and ties placed over switches. The company succeeded in refusing the demands for a union and little notice of the strike was made in Deerfield.

Deerfield's rural trolley had a relatively short existence and lasted only 23 years. In general, Massachusetts street railway systems were among the first lines to fold, with almost all of them bankrupt by 1930. The emergence of motor transportation was the major reason for their rapid decline, especially in Deerfield's situation. Rising costs attributed to the first World War were a secondary cause that hastened the decline.

Automobiles first appeared in Franklin County at the turn of the century but were not prevalent until 1912. The following year saw a charge placed on automobiles entering the grounds of the county's agricultural fair, when over four hundred were parked. Also during 1913, the first auto garage was erected in South Deerfield, and another was opened at Lake Pleasant for the convenience of guests. Autos began to rival trolleys as pleasure vehicles, and by 1917, Greenfield had sponsored its first annual auto show. The word "car" became a reference to a motor-driven vehicle and not necessarily to a trolley.

The street railways experienced severe motor competition in 1915 with the appearance of street jitneys, small motor buses designed to lure passengers from trolleys. These conveyances hurt the Connecticut Valley Company on its profitable run between Greenfield and Turners Falls, and the company threatened to cease operations completely if the jitneys were not municipally regulated. It finally took them over in 1919 and ran them in conjunction with the streetcars. It was the state's first trolley line to operate motor buses.

Most Deerfield residents had purchased cars by 1924, and some had bought them as early as 1910. At first, their use was limited, both for technical reasons and because of poor road conditions in the area. But Deerfield selectmen were soon preoccupied with the improvement of the town's highway system and appropriated money regularly for grading and paving of thoroughfares. Town residents recalled using autos to a greater extent than electrics by the end of the war.

General use of motor transportation significantly damaged patronage on the Deerfield division. It destroyed the line's viability because it was a more successful competitor in the two areas of the trolley's greatest impact: social and school use. Early use of the automobile was as a touring car; this idea became extremely popular, and autos quickly supplanted rural trolleys. Visitors to Deerfield in 1920 arrived mainly by auto, and most trips and outings to Lake Pleasant and other parks were by motor transportation. The automobile performed the functions of the electric in a superior manner.

Motor-driven vehicles proved more convenient for transporting school children. The Deerfield school board eliminated all but one wagon team by 1921 and relied on

trolleys and motor trucks. Although the streetcar still carried nearly 30,000 students a year at its end, its share of the school transportation budget had grown proportionately smaller. Motor trucks were superior, being faster and able to travel anywhere in the school district. They could vary schedules and allow for special exigencies. In the 1922 school report, the committee noted, "Either one of the conveyances [motor trucks], coming through Cheapside, should be large enough to carry to school all the children who live along the road from Cheapside to Old Deerfield, and save the carfare on the electrics."

The trolley express was rendered obsolete by the appearance of modern trucks, which offered similar service with great flexibility. They could pick up and deliver to a place of business, which avoided rehandling of goods, and their schedules could be arranged to fit the needs of individual firms. Trucks also replaced the trolley mail service and were able to run routes serving the widest area.

The street railway company was taken over by new management in 1918. Loss of patronage had combined with soaring costs due to wartime inflation and substantial maintenance needs to produce large deficits. The new managers realized that the nature of trolley service had drastically altered. Electrics could no longer depend on social and recreational travel, and attempts were made to attract commuter and professional travel. A weekday limited-stop trolley was inaugurated between Greenfield and Northampton, making the run in 70 minutes. It was an effort to attract more through travelers, but potential was limited, and the service lasted less than a year.

Two years later, the Connecticut Valley Street Railway went into receivership but managed to continue operations on a curtailed basis until 1924. Deerfield schedules were cut back to 90-minute departures in an effort to remain solvent. An indication of this division's impending collapse was in a comparison of current summer patronage to that in 1908. A drop of almost 90% had occurred, although winter travel was not precipitously lower. The chart indicated the effectiveness of motor transportation in destroying the rural trolley. On Sunday, March 30, the last streetcar ran through Deerfield, and the next day brought an end to company operations.

The electrics to Turners Falls continued to run, having been purchased for municipal ownership by the towns of Greenfield and Montague. Their commuter service for factory workers remained popular. This line was able to compete with the automobile for several years by stressing its urban benefits: its practicality for workers and the absence of parking or weather problems. The line's formula for survival was in actively acknowledging the automobile but attempting to highlight its inconvenient side effects. The Greenfield-Turners Falls route lost its rural aspects and served an urban class of people less able to afford motor transportation.

Most Deerfield residents were untroubled by the streetcar's passing. Tracks were quickly torn up and poles removed, and the street was taken over by autos and trucks in a constant movement through the town. For residents not owning automobiles, a bus service was begun from South Deerfield to Greenfield. It provided a poor substitute for a car, with its schedules less frequent than those of the electrics. The period of the rural trolley had ended.

VI. LEGACY OF THE RURAL TROLLEY

In its 23 years of service, the rural trolley through Deerfield significantly altered social and recreational habits. Its potential for increasing travel mobility in social recreational spheres was widely used by village residents and expanded the bounds of town life. The semi-isolation in which the farm community had existed was gradually lifted by the use of the trolley, and subsequent motor transportation strengthened its impact. The Deerfield trolley effected village employment patterns little, because the town was so agricultural and was not generally vital for shipping. But in its use for short social trips lay important effects for the village.

An expansion of social contact with neighboring regions was an irreversible process, once begun. Rides to the Greenfield opera soon became trips to band concerts at Lake Pleasant and visits to Northampton. Sunday outings grew more frequent, especially with children. Friendships were made with residents of other towns through greater attendance at organizations and fairs. Deerfield became better known and experienced a quantum jump in the number of county visitors coming for its history and/or beauty. The impact of trolleys on school transportation intertwined with the above effects. School centralization and more systematic attendance developed, processes which gathered their own momentum.

The rapid collapse of rural electric systems was due largely, in retrospect, to their success in reshaping social habits. Motor transportation provided more convenient conveyance but was similar to electric travel in its impact. It extended to more areas the short-trip flexibility established by trolleys and created additional travel mobility. The automobile built upon foundations laid by the trolley.

Scant physical evidence of the Deerfield streetcar line existed in 1971. An occasional right-of-way could be recognized, and some old bridge supports were noticeable, but no building boom resulting from its construction remained as evidence of the past. But the rural trolley influenced Deerfield's social patterns, and in this area its ramifications remained visible.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

Mrs. Margaret Allen — lived in Bars area, and also in Wapping
Mrs. Katharine Arms — lived in Bars area, and also in Old Deerfield
Mr. Francis Billings — lived in the Wapping area
Mr. Harry Brown — lived in Old Deerfield
Miss Harriet Childs — lived in Old Deerfield
Mr. Henry Leland Clarke — spent several summers in Old Deerfield
Miss Elizabeth Fuller — lived at the Bars
Miss Helen Gerrett — lived in the Meadows area of Greenfield
Miss Elizabeth Greene — lived in Greenfield
Miss Harriet Harris — lived in the Bars area
Miss Rachel Hawks — lived in the Wapping area
Mr. Fred Hyde — lived in Old Deerfield

Mr. John Kiley — lived in Greenfield
Mr. George Melnik — lived in the Wapping area
Mrs. Alice Merriam — lived in Turners Falls
Miss Marguerite Rist — lived in Turners Falls
Miss Julia D.S. Snow — lived in Greenfield
Miss Mary Wells — lived in Old Deerfield
Mr. Frank Yazwinski — lived in Old Deerfield

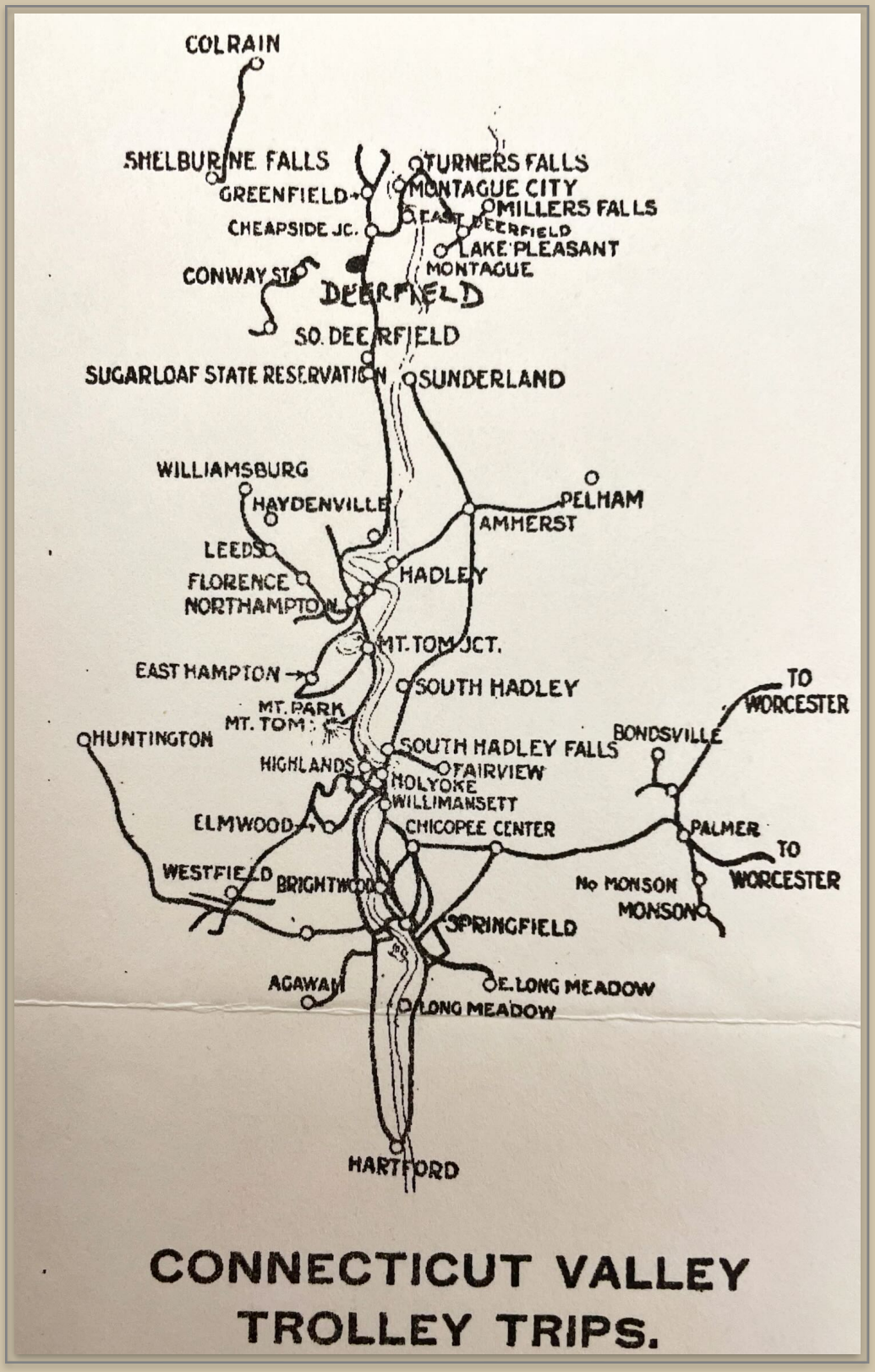
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION OF DEERFIELD TROLLEY

An early task in researching for this paper was establishing the date of construction for the Deerfield trolley. Kelsey Flower in her P.V.M.A. writings had placed it in August 1900, but Lucy Kellogg and others wrote of the line being builtin 1903. The obvious conflict had to be resolved in someone's favor.

But newspaper research and several interviews revealed that neither author was correct. The actual date of October 1901, differed substantially from both accounts .

Kelsey Flower had erred probably because she assumed that building of the line had proceeded immediately from the town meeting's approval of the trolley of March 1900. Kellogg's inaccuracy was more difficult to explain. She would have had access to company documents when she wrote her History of Greenfield volume in 1931, which would have given the correct date. The error was most damaging in that it has been continued in later trolley articles, especially those written after company documents were lost. Even a letter written in the 1940's by J.A. Taggart, the former streetcar superintendent, made reference to dates found in Kellogg’s book .

APPENDIX D. TROLLEY LINE MAP AND LIST OF RATES AND CONNECTIONS



The map of rural trolley lines in the Connecticut Valley, and the list of rates and connections from Springfield to Greenfield are from the Trolley Wayfinder of 1909, the Official Street Railway Guide of New England.

Table 5 Springfield Trolley Trips.

Springfield to Greenfield and Millers Falls.

SPRINGFIELD to	Total Dist., mls.	Total Fare, Cts.	Total Time, h. m.		Connections
W. Springfield	2	.05	.17	(1)	
W. Springfield line	6	.05	.30		
Springdale	8	.10	.40		
Holyoke	10	.10	.50	(2)	
Highlands	15	.10	1.05		
Mt. Tom & Min. Pk.	14	.15	1.10	(3)	Transfer to Mt. Tom cars at Mountain Park.
Smith's Ferry	17	.15	1.15		
Mt. Tom Jc.	18	.15	1.20	(4)	
Northampton	21	.20	1.35	(5)	
Hatfield	28	.30	2.05		
Sugarloaf State Res.	34	.41	2.24		
So. Deerfield	35	.44	2.28	(6)	
Wapping	38	.50	2.43		
Deerfield	40	.50	2.51		
Cheapside Jc.	41	.56	2.57		
Greenfield	43	.56	3.05	(7)	
Get transfer and change at Cheapside Jc. for					
Montague City	45	.50	3.15		
Turners Falls	47	.62	3.25		
Lake Pleasant	51	.74	3.53		
Millers Falls	53	.74	4.05		
Montague	54	.74	4.05		

(1) To Mittineague, 2 m., 5c., 10 min.

(2) To So. Hadley Falls, 2 m., 5c., 10 min.; So. Hadley Centre, 4 m., 5c., 30 min.; Amherst, 11 m., 16c., 1.05; Sunderland, 23 m., 26c., 1.45; Pelham, 16 m., 22c., 1.25; Holyoke to Westfield, 11 m., 15c., 55 min.; Holyoke to Fairview, 4 m., 5c., 25 min.; Holyoke to Willimansett, 2 m., 5c., 15 min.; Aldenville, 3 m., 5c., 20 min.; Chicopee Falls, 4½ m., 5c., 30 min.; Holyoke to Willimansett, 2 m., 5c., 15 min.; Chicopee Street, 3 m., 5c., 20 min.; Chicopee River Bridge, 4 m., 5c., 30 min.

Holyoke to Hampton Ponds, 6½ m., 10c., 35 min.; Westfield, 11½ m., 15c., 55 min.; Huntington, 22 m., 35c., 1.50.

(3) To Mt. Tom Summit House, by Mt. Tom Railway, 1 m., 25c. for round trip and admission to Summit House. (See page 44.)

(4) To Easthampton, 2 m., 5c., 15 min.

(5) Northampton to Florence, 3 m., 5c., 20 min.; Leeds, 5 m., 5c., 30 min.; Haydenville, 7 m., 10c., 40 min.; Williamsburg, 9m., 10c., 50 min.; Northampton to Bay State, 3 m., 5c., 20 min.; Northampton to Mt. Tom Jc., via South St. and Easthampton—to Easthampton, 5m., 5c., 25 min.; to Mt. Tom Jc., 9½ m., 10c., 50 min.; Northampton to Hadley, 3 m., 5c., 20 min.; Amherst, 8 m., 12c., 30 min.; Amherst to North Amherst, 3m., 5c., 15 min.; Sunderland, 8 m., 12c., 35 min.; Amherst to Pelham, 2½ m., 5c., 15 min.

Springfield to Longmeadow (state line), 7½ m., 5c., 30 min.; East Longmeadow, 5 m., 5c., 30 min.; Brightwood, 2m., 5c., 15 min.; Chicopee, 3½ m., 5c., 20 min.; Chicopee Falls, 6m., 5c., 37 min.; Indian Orchard and Ludlow 7½ m., 5c., 35 min.; Agawam, 7 m., 5c., 30 min.; Suffield, Ct., 12 m., 10c., 1.00; Hartford (see Worcester to New York).

Springfield to Pittsfield. Take Boston & Albany for Pittsfield, 52 m., $1.17, 1.13. For points north and south of Pittsfield, see Pittsfield Trolley Trips, page 26.

(6) Boston & Maine Railroad for Conway and Shelburne Falls.

(7) Boston & Maine Railroad for Conway and Shelburne Falls.

Springfield to Westfield, 10 m., 10c., 50 min.; Hampton Ponds, 14 m., 15c., 1.15; Huntington, 21 m., 30c., 1.45.

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For rates and connections see page 43.

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